

**Sierra Nevada Conservancy Grant Program  
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control,  
River and Coastal Protection Act of 2006 (Proposition 84)**

**Subregion:** NORTH CENTRAL **County:** SIERRA

**Applicant:** SIERRA COUNTY LAND TRUST

**Project Title:** SIERRA BUTTES/LAKES BASIN LAND ACQUISITION – BIEHL PARCEL

**Reference Number:** SNC 070316

**PROJECT SCOPE**

This acquisition in fee title of .021 acre (9,147 sq.ft.) would help to protect 30% of the remaining undeveloped lands within the Sierra Buttes/Gold Lakes Basin Special Treatment Area. Total appraised value is \$44,700. The parcel is important because it is located directly adjacent to Lusk Meadows and drains directly into Salmon Creek. The applicant, SCLT, would complete escrow documents, post signs and do final site visit to the project area. SNC funds would complete the purchase.

Specific actions include:

- Final negotiations with the landowner;
- Fee Title purchase of .021 acres.

**PROJECT SCHEDULE**

<b>DETAILED PROJECT DELIVERABLES</b>	<b>TIMELINE</b>
Finalize negotiations with land owner	October 30, 2008
Final Site Visits	October 30, 2008
Close Escrow	February 1, 2009
<b>Final Report/Final Payment Request</b>	<b>March 1, 2009</b>

**PROJECT COSTS**

<b>PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES</b>	<b>TOTAL SNC FUNDING</b>
Complete acquisition	\$44,700
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$44,700</b>

**Letters of Support:**

- Sierra County Board of Supervisors

**Recommendation:**

Staff recommendation is to fund this project at the requested level of \$44,700.

## 2. Project Summary

The Sierra County Land Trust, a non-profit and tax exempt 501(c) 3 organization, is applying for a Proposition 84 Strategic Opportunity Grant 1 for \$41,500 to purchase in fee title a 0.021 acre (9,147 sq. ft.) parcel of land on Lusk Meadow in the Sierra Buttes/Gold Lakes Basin Special Treatment Area of Sierra County. (Total project cost is \$44,700.) The parcel is particularly important because it is located directly adjacent to Lusk Meadow, a high mountain meadow which drains directly into Salmon Creek. The purchase is part of our program to eventually acquire all of the small parcels which remain lining Lusk Meadow at the entrance to the Salmon Lakes sub-basin of the Gold Lakes Basin.

We are proud that the Sierra County Board of Supervisors will be our co-applicant.

The main goal of our organization is to preserve land for water quality and open space protection specifically in the Sierra Buttes/ Lakes Basin of Sierra County. The Sierra Buttes/ Lakes Basin, with its craggy, snow covered peaks and multitude of sub-alpine lakes, is recognized as one of the most compelling visual features of the northern Sierra Nevada. However, the Buttes and the Basin are also critical contributors to the Yuba River watershed, making up a significant portion of the flow of the North Fork of the Yuba River which forms a border of the Basin. Locally, groundwater fed by the snow fields of the Buttes supply the Basin and Sierra City water supplies, accessed by a series of ditches and water storage tunnels that date to the gold mining days.

There are currently only approximately 3000 acres of private land left in the Basin. We are in escrow or in negotiations on approximately 900 acres of land to be purchased with a \$5.6 million Sierra Nevada Cascade Conservation Grant which we partnered with the High Sierra Rural Alliance to receive last year. The remaining private parcels total approximately 50, with 35 separate property owners. This new grant would allow us to purchase a portion of the remaining private lands; combined with the previous grant, we have the opportunity to secure up to approximately 30% of the remaining private lands in the Basin. We are in contact with these property owners and, over time, we expect many of them to take advantage of preserving their properties in perpetuity through the Land Trust.